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CURRENT EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE

In Defence of Classical Study. By PROFESSOR JEBB. Eclectic, January, 1894.

The spirit which the classics embody now animates the higher literature of the country to a greater extent than at any previous time in the history of English letters. Moreover an intelligent interest in the great masterpieces of ancient literature and art is far more widely diffused than it ever was before in England. The process by which this has been effected may be briefly traced. In the latter part of the eighteenth century the distinctive qualities of the old Greek genius began to be appreciated: this was due chiefly to Lessing and Winckelmann in art, to Goethe and Schiller in literature. Meanwhile Romanticism had arisen, of which Scott remains the most signal embodiment in our literature, as contrasted with the classical tendency. Then came Byron identified, in his last years, with Greece, and masterly in his description of its natural beauties, but not in harmony with the mind of its ancient people. Shelley was keenly alive to the beauty of Greek literature. Keats was in much Greek by instinct, though his style was usually less classical than romantic. Landon in his prose is a conscious artist working in the spirit of the classical masters. But these men appealed only to a few. Carlyle is anti-classical. Macaulay, with his intimate knowledge of the classics, his ardent love of them, does not exhibit the qualities and charms which are distinctive of the best classical prose. John Henry Newman exhibits them in an eminent degree, reminding us that for their happy manifestation a certain spiritual element is requisite, a certain tone of the whole mind and character.

A new current set in soon after the middle of the century, when a more living interest in classical antiquity began to be felt by the cultivated portion of the English public. This became perceptible first in history. Grote invested ancient Greece with a modern interest, and the good work was carried on by Mr. Freeman, who ever insisted on the unity of history. Among purely literary forces tending to create a more appreciative sympathy with classical literature, the foremost place must be given Tennyson: his influence is not only direct in his poems on classical themes, but it operates generally by his artistic perfection of form, which is always, in spirit, classical. Second only to Tennyson is Matthew Arnold who wrought for Hellenism in two ways; by example in his own exquisite poetry; and by precept, as in his lectures on translating Homer, and generally in his critical essays, and in "Culture and Anarchy." Browning's normal style is far from classical; but his work has one element of kinship with the Greek; by an intense vitality it is always a voice of life. The late J. A. Symonds and Professor Sellar have tended to popularize, without vulgarizing, the classics. We have a number of good

translations; in the forefront of which stands that beautiful work through which Professor Jowett has made Plato an English classic.

Thus Greek and Latin studies have been brought more and more into the current of intellectual interests. No less significant is the change in English appreciation of classical art which special causes have favored: excavations in Hellenic lands, increased facilities of travel, the establishment at Athens of permanent centres of research. Within the last fifty years there has been great progress in the comparative method, in the study of manuscripts, in textual criticism, in archæology. There is danger lest under high specializing the larger view of the humanities be lost. Classical studies are now, on the whole, more efficient in England than they ever were; more in touch with the literary and artistic interests of the day.

The classics will keep their place in our system of liberal education, because their true claims are now more generally understood. Modern civilization is interwoven with the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome. The Greek mind was the great originating mind of Europe. As Reiman says, "Progress will eternally consist in developing what Greece conceived." This constitutes the historical claim of the classics. On literary grounds their claim is two-fold; first their intrinsic beauty, and their unexpected wealth of suggestive thought. Secondly, directly or indirectly they have moulded, or helped to inspire almost all the best writing of the modern world. Thirdly, the linguistic claim, Latin and Greek are of cardinal importance for the study of comparative philology and general grammar. As instruments of mental training they have the advantage of a structure organically distinct from the modern. The epithet "dead" suggests one of their chief recommendations. In a modern language, living authority can decide questions of usage or idiom; Greek and Latin make a more exacting demand on the learner's nicety of judgment. It is good to have in our literary education one large subject rich in problems which excite curiosity, but do not admit of any certain solution. "Probability," as Bishop Butler says, "is the very guide of life"; and for probable reasoning, as distinguished from demonstrative, it would be hard to find a more varied field than is afforded by the classics. It is no new question, how best to combine *education*, the bringing out of the faculties, with *instruction*, the imparting of valuable knowledge. Modern life tends to insist first upon instruction. Classical studies serve to inform the mind, to mould and train it; but they also instruct; and the usages of the knowledge which they give are manifold.

On this same subject Dr. Harris says, among other suggestive thoughts, in his article on "The Report of the Committee of Ten" in the *Educational Review* for January, 1894: "Latin and Greek are not dead languages. Nor were they ever eventually more useful in a liberal education than now. * * * A youth equipped with Latin and Greek has powers of learning and understanding whatever relates to the social, political, and legal forms and usages of his people, that give him a distinct

advantage over the youth educated only in the 'moderns.' * * * I have long since abandoned my objections to the traditional education of Latin and Greek in colleges and academies."

O. B. Rhodes

A Plan to Free the Schools from Politics. By DR. J. M. RICE. The Forum, December, 1893.

Our public school system is without a foundation. There are as many school systems as there are cities, towns, and country districts. The ideal system does not lie in absolute local control. The standard on the whole is low because the system is under political control. Some of our city schools are among the best in the world. But the uncertainty of political control is a constant menace. Absolute local authority as an ideal has as many disadvantages as it has favorable considerations. It affords as much opportunity to plunder the schools as it does to raise the standard.

Nor does the ideal lie in absolute state control as in Germany. The German system is strong where ours is weak, and *vice versa*. The ideal system would be one of limited state control combining the advantages of both.

The German system is not national since each "dominion" retains the right to manage its own schools. But practically the system is uniform in all the dominions. The minister of culture in each dominion appoints the upper educational advisory board, which prescribes all important school regulations. There are also lower district boards whose power is limited chiefly to enforcing the prescriptions of the upper board. The powers of inspectors and superintendents are limited.

The rigidity of such a system dampers progressive teachers and produces uniformity. Private schools are not exempt. The state regulations are, however, conservative. The advantages outweigh the disadvantages. The chief advantage is that every child is assured of an education of a certain standard. The teacher cannot fall below a minimum requirement. German schools are managed by educators, American schools by laymen. German conservatism is philosophical and rational, American irrational. In German schools objective methods have reached a comparatively high stage of development. The German system is strong in maintaining a fixed standard, the American in the independence of the teacher. The ideal system would divest the boards of the power to permit the schools to fall below a certain standard without being deprived of the power to raise the standard.

The state should prescribe: (1) the frame work of the course of study and certain regulations concerning methods of teaching, allowing superintendents and teachers considerable freedom in completing the structure; (2) certain important laws concerning the general management of schools.

1. Laws to prevent the text-book abuse, the hearing of *memoriter* recitations, the method still most commonly employed in the public schools of America, (?) but no longer tolerated in any of the German schools. Munich has excluded from the schools the use of text-books in geography, history, and the natural sciences.

2. Laws compelling the schools to devote a minimum number of hours each week to objective work, to prevent the primary schools from dwindling down to purely mechanical reading, writing, and arithmetic schools. The poorest reading and writing is found where instruction is limited, practically, to the three R's.

3. Teachers should be obliged by law to employ phonics in teaching children to read. In primary schools where phonics are not used the waste of time is enormous. Regulations might be made restricting the use of unscientific methods in teaching spelling and technical grammar, and the use of text-books in geography and history.

Concerning the general management of schools Dr. Rice suggests:

1. Laws prescribing the methods of appointing teachers so that members of boards of education might be restricted in using their positions for purposes of patronage. Qualifications for licenses to teach in city schools might be regulated by the state. 2. The state might insure proper supervision for the city schools, by compelling the employment of an adequate number of superintendents, and by requiring superintendents to meet their teachers a minimum number of times each month for conference on grade work, and instruction in the science of education and methods of teaching.

Finally, there might be a state board of education of five or six educational experts to be permanently maintained by the state. Their duties should be in general to visit schools at home and abroad to become conversant with the doings of educators in all parts of the civilized world in order to secure a scientific basis for action. Specifically their duties should be (1) to deliver pedagogical lectures to teachers in different parts of the state; (2) to inspect schools in order to observe that the state laws are enforced.

O. B. R.

SOME RECENT EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES.

Education for Girls in France. By Katherine de Forest, *Scribner's Magazine*, November, 1893. "Above everything else, a Frenchman insists that his children shall be able to write and speak their own language, not only correctly, but with elegance."

O. B. R.

Spectacled Schoolboys. By Ernest Hart. *Atlantic*, November 1893. A sensible article pointing out that "The more general use of spectacles... both by children and adults, is mainly the result, not of any increase of eye disease or degeneration of vision," but "is the index of the progress of a new and practical application of physical science to the relief of

a widespread and very ancient series of troubles, arising from defects which have always existed,—but which are now far more readily tested and remedied than they were during the lives of the last and earlier generations.”

The Hungry Greeklings. By Emily James Smith. *Ibid.* A study of the Greek as he appeared in the Roman world. The author is known as the translator of a volume of selections from Lucian.

The New Moral Drift in French Education. By Paul Bourget. *The Forum*, November, 1893.

Child-Study: The Basis of Exact Education. By Prest. G. Stanley Hall. *The Forum*, December, 1893.

Winchester College. *The Quarterly Review*, October, 1893.

Religion at the London School Board. By the Hon. E. Lyulph Stanley. *The Nineteenth Century*, November, 1893.

Education and Instruction. An address delivered in the Salt Schools, Shipley, Yorkshire, in June, 1893. By Lord Coleridge. *The Contemporary Review*, December, 1893.

The Strasburg Commemoration. A letter from a Scottish student. *Ibid.*

Das humanistische Gymnasium. Vierter Jahrgang. 1893. Heft III.

Das holländische Gymnasium, von K. Bluemlein, III.

Die Wiener Philologenversammlung

Der revidierte Lehrplan der hessischen Gymnasien

Neuere und neueste Aeusserungen über Schulreform, bespr. von G. Uhlig III.

Philologie und Schulreform, von U. von Wilamowitz.

Moellendorf.

Zeitschrift fuer die oesterreichischen Gymnasien Elftes Heft. 10 Nov. 1893. Wien, Carl Gerolds Sohn.

1. Zwei Wiener Handschriften zu Ciceros “De Inventione Von H. Muzik, in Krems.

2. Zur Ermordung des Hipparchos nach Aristoteles.

3. Horace c. II. 15, 17 ff. Von H. Müller in Weissenburg i. E.

4. Zu Caesaris bell. Gall. I. 40, 10, von H. Muzik.

Central Organ fuer die Interessen des Realschulwesens. Heft. XI. 7 Nov. 1893.

Dürfen wir in unseren deutschen Schulen auf Ertheilung des Religionsunterrichts verzichten?

Von Oberlehrer Ludwig Rudolph in Berlin.

Zeitschrift fuer die oesterreichischen Gymnasien 8 & 9 Heft, 28 Sept. 1893.

Widersprueche in Kunstdichtungen. Max H. Jellinck. Carl Kraus.

Zeitschrift fuer die oesterreichischen Gymnasien Zehntes Heft. 20 Oct. 1893.

Johann Gabriel Seidl und Carl Gottfried R. von Leitner.

Von Anton Schlossar.

Paedagogisches Archiv No. 10. 1 Oct. 1893.

Bericht über die zweite Versammlung des Vereins zur Forderung des Unterrichts in der Mathematik und den Naturwissenschaften in Berlin am 4, 5 und 6 April 1893. (Schluss)

Central Organ fuer die Interessen des Realschulwesens. Heft X. 7 Oct. 1893.

Die Sage vom Elfen-Arni. Eine isländische Volkssage, aus dem Neuisländischen zum ersten Male ins Deutsche uebertragen von Dr. Heinrich v. Lenk.

Katlas Traum Eine isländische Volkssage aus dem Neuisländischen zum ersten Male ins Deutsche uebertragen von Dr. Heinrich v. Lenk.

Heft, IX.

Formal sprachliche Bildung durch den Unterricht in der Muttersprache, Formal logische Bildung durch den Unterricht in der Mathematik, Von Direktor Dr. Völcker in Schönebeck a. d. Elbe. (Schluss.)

Paedagogisches Archiv No. 9. 1 Sept., 1893.

Bericht über die zweite Versammlung des Vereins zur Forderung des Unterrichts in der Mathematik und den Naturwissenschaften in Berlin am 4, 5, and 6 April 1893.

Zeitschrift fuer lateinlose hoehere Schulen IV, Jahrgang. 12 Heft. Sept. 1893.

Entlastung einzelner Lehrer von der vorgeschriebenen Maximalstundenzahl bei der Berechnung des zu deckenden Unterrichtsbedürfnisses des höheren Lehranstalten.

Übersicht über die Entwicklung des Realschulwesens in der Provinz Hessen-Nassau Von. Dr. Karl Knabe.